
Galatians

Author

The book of Galatians is Paul's letter to the churches in what we know as modern Turkey. Paul was confronting legalism [i.e. attempting to please God by rules, rituals, or obedience instead of by grace and faith].

False teachers were:

- Spreading legalism ([Gal 1:9](#), [Gal 3:1](#), [Gal 6:12](#))
- Perverting the gospel message ([Gal 1:7](#))
- Creating hypocrites ([Gal 2:11-13](#))
- Cursing people with trying to keep the law ([Gal 3:10](#))
- Destroying people's spiritual lives ([Gal 5:1](#)).

Key Verse

Gal 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." (NKJV)

Outline

On the Truth and Freedom of the Gospel

The Gospel is Authentic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gal 1, genuine origin• Gal 2, genuine nature
The Gospel is Superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gal 3, new relation• Gal 4, privileges
The Gospel is True Liberty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gal 5, love ends bondage of the law• Gal 6, Spirit ends bondage of the flesh

Personal Reflection and Application

Do you have any rules or rituals that you believe you must follow to earn or maintain your salvation? Read [Galatians 2:16](#) and [Galatians 2:20](#). There is nothing you can do to justify yourself to God. To be justified, you must accept Christ as your Savior by faith. When you do, God gives you credit for what Christ has done. That is the process of justification. You may be thinking, "But, I don't deserve it." That's the point!

Sometimes, we make things more difficult than they are. The Galatians thought that by adding rules and rituals, they would improve themselves ([Gal 3:1-3](#)). Do you struggle with accepting the simplicity that is in Christ ([2Cor 11:3](#))? The law may guide you toward

Christ, but it takes faith to accept Christ as your Savior ([Gal 3:23-25](#)).

Notice the term "adoption" in [Galatians 4:5](#). Adoption is a Roman legal term that means officially receiving someone into a family with full rights as a family member. A person born into a family did not have rights until he came of age and received the adoption. It was the same process for someone born outside the family to receive legal rights as a family member. Have you received the adoption to become a member of God's family? The only way to do that is through Christ ([Gal 4:4-7](#)).

Small Group Conversation Guide

For many people, it's difficult to wrap their minds around the idea that eternal security is FREE. They have an urge to do something to earn their salvation. Just like the prison keeper in [Acts 16:30](#), they ask, "What must I do to be saved?" Read [Acts 16:31](#), [Galatians 1:4](#), and [Galatians 3:22](#). Discuss how you came to the realization that salvation is a gift that you can't earn. Until you accept that gift, you have no peace. The unmerited favor of God always comes before we experience true peace. Grace precedes peace ([Gal 1:3](#)).

In [Galatians 4:1-7](#), Paul contrasts being a slave under the law with being a child of God through Christ. Notice that Paul says because we are children of God, we are to pray directly to Him. We don't need to find someone in authority to talk to God for us.

We can talk to Him directly. Discuss the privilege that we have to talk to God directly. Discuss why we sometimes don't keep those communication lines open.

Does transformation come from the outside in or from the inside out? The law, following rules, seeks to change you from the outside. It limits and punishes. The Spirit seeks to change you from the inside. Read [Galatians 5:16-18](#). Get a picture in your mind of walking hand in hand with the Spirit. To do so means that you can't lag behind or barge ahead. The minute you let go of that hand, the flesh is ready to attack you. Discuss ways to keep walking in the Spirit.

Leadership Principles from Galatians

When They Don't Want to Hear the Truth

As a leader, you have a responsibility to be truthful with those under your care. This can be especially difficult when they don't want to hear the truth. You may get the response that Paul did in [Galatians 4:16](#).

How do you handle those types of situations? Paul reminded them of what they already knew and showed them how it applied to their situation. What would it take for you to be able to use that strategy?

Do Not Hinder

God expects more from leaders ([Luke 12:47-48](#)). He has entrusted them with influence over others. When a leader hinders another person from obeying the truth, the leader will bear judgment. Read [Galatians 5:7-10](#). What can you do to be certain that you do not hinder anyone from obeying the truth?

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter.
Try these:

01. What the churches of Galatia did to surprise Paul	02. What legalism implies about the death of Christ
03. Who Abraham's children and heirs are spiritually	04. How Abraham's sons picture the Old/New Testaments
05. How we are to use our liberty/freedom from the law	06. What the principle of sowing and reaping is